

Representative: \_\_\_\_\_



Delivering electricity you can rely on

**Input Form**

Name: Marla Kendig  
Address: 12897 150th St E  
Telephone: 507-683-1597  
Email: kendig.nj@gmail.com  
Date: 6/17/09  
Meeting location: Woramingo

Check one:

- ☒ Landowner                      ☐ Elected Official  
☐ Agency                              ☐ City/County Staff  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

2 Houses not on map  
South of 150th on Goodhue Ave  
2 Tower not on map  
South of 160th on Goodhue Ave  
1 House not on map  
Southeast of 385th St & -

**I-090-001**

Your comment has been noted. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities are striving to provide the most up to date information in a timely manner. Project information is updated regularly on the project website, [www.capx2020.com](http://www.capx2020.com).

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

I-090-001

## COMMENT FORM

Public Scoping Meetings

We need your input. Please take a few minutes to provide your comments or questions for the USDA RUS Federal Environmental Impact Statement process and return your completed form today or mail by June 29, 2009. Your comments help in the planning and implementation of the project. **Thank you.**

Completing this form will automatically add you to our mailing list. If you prefer to not be on the mailing list, please check the box below.

☐ I do not wish to be on the project mailing list

Which meeting did you attend? \_\_\_\_\_

*Centerville*

Please check the following issues that are important to you for transmission line siting.

- ☒ Project Purpose and Need
- ☒ Visual / Aesthetic resources
- ☒ Proximity to residences
- ☒ Land use (agriculture, residential, recreation)
- ☒ Water resources (floodplains, river crossings)
- ☒ Biological resources (wildlife habitat, raptors)
- ☒ Historic and cultural sites
- ☒ Radio or television interference
- ☒ Noise
- ☒ Health and safety
- ☒ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What additional key issues should be addressed when assessing the potential impacts of this project?

I-091-001

*More conservation measures need to be part of our future consumption. This line seems to "feed the consumption monster".*

I-091-002

*Do we continue to believe people will use more and more electricity? It needs to be explained that the need for this line may be based on people's consumer habit - more electrical devices. This is what we get for all the "things" we buy that consume electricity. - We'll probably need more of these beyond this one if we all continue to act like there is no end.*

Hampton • Rochester • La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project

### I-091-001

Your comment has been noted. Alternatives to the project will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

### I-091-002

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will describe, in detail, project purpose and need. The justification document which has been accepted by the RUS is the Alternative Evaluation study which is available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

If you own property in one of the proposed corridors, please indicate all the existing uses of your property below:

- ☐ Agriculture      ☐ Residential      ☐ Conservation Easement  
☐ Commercial      ☐ Industrial      ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe any special uses or circumstances on your property that should be considered when assessing the Project. Please indicate the location of your property.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

In your opinion, what are the most sensitive resources (biological, cultural, recreational, ect.) in the Project area and why?

*You build these corridors, then you spray them, while people are out of work.*

I-091-004

*I just feel helpless about these gauges and the disturbances to our natural balances*

I-091-003

*which does include disruption to habitat and stray voltage and its effect all around. I think we have no idea, even in our homes, about how this may affect our health. Sorry, but I feel like a doomsayer here.*

### I-091-003

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human and livestock health and safety with regard to stray voltage will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

### I-091-004

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to wildlife will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

In your opinion, was the project description, purpose, and need for the project adequately explained? If not, what additional information is needed?

*Seemed ok for my initial perusal.*

Please tell us how to reach you.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: *David Langer*

Representing (Optional): *Self & family & friends*

Mailing Address: *3211 S. 34th*

City: *La Crosse* State: *WI* Zip Code: *54601*

Daytime Phone (Optional):

Public participation for the Federal, Minnesota, and Wisconsin permitting processes will be ongoing for the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project. If you sign up for the mailing list, you will be notified when opportunities to participate are being planned.

Please plan to continue your involvement in the process and provide your comments. We appreciate your input.



## COMMENT FORM

Public Scoping Meetings

We need your input. Please take a few minutes to provide your comments or questions for the USDA RUS Federal Environmental Impact Statement process and return your completed form today or mail by June 29, 2009. Your comments help in the planning and implementation of the project. **Thank you.**

Completing this form will automatically add you to our mailing list. If you prefer to not be on the mailing list, please check the box below.

☐ I do not wish to be on the project mailing list

Which meeting did you attend? all 3 meetings at Centerville, WI

Please check the following issues that are important to you for transmission line siting.

- ☒ Project Purpose and Need
- ☒ Visual / Aesthetic resources
- ☒ Proximity to residences
- ☒ Land use (agriculture, residential, recreation)
- ☒ Water resources (floodplains, river crossings)
- ☒ Biological resources (wildlife habitat, raptors)
- ☐ Historic and cultural sites
- ☐ Radio or television interference
- ☐ Noise
- ☒ Health and safety
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What additional key issues should be addressed when assessing the potential impacts of this project?

I have not been convinced of the  
actual need at this point, which I addressed  
later in this form  
Impacts on land, aesthetics, wildlife,  
and personal health all seem huge.

Hampton • Rochester • La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project

**I-092-001**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human and livestock health and safety will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

If you own property in one of the proposed corridors, please indicate all the existing uses of your property below:

- ☐ Agriculture      ☐ Residential      ☐ Conservation Easement  
☐ Commercial      ☐ Industrial      ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe any special uses or circumstances on your property that should be considered when assessing the Project. Please indicate the location of your property.

NA

In your opinion, what are the most sensitive resources (biological, cultural, recreational, ect.) in the Project area and why?

There are so many sensitive areas, it's hard to determine what will be impacted the most. It will be a huge aesthetic problem, will impact the land, will undoubtedly be a negative issue with wildlife, and nobody seems to be able to give a definitive answer as to the health issues that may be brought on by such huge transmission.

I-092-001

In your opinion, was the project description, purpose, and need for the project adequately explained? If not, what additional information is needed?

I-092-002

I feel strongly that this project needs to be put on hold. I feel our country is finally headed in the right direction as far as conservation and environmental concerns. This new administration seems to be committed so why not hold off and see if they live up to their promises? If they do and if we the people buy into it (as it appears to be happening), there may be quite likely not even be a need for expansion.

I-092-003

Doesn't it make sense - even financial sense on your part - to take an optimistic wait and see philosophy?

Please tell us how to reach you.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Scott Lee

Representing (Optional):

Mailing Address: 24880 2nd St

City: Trempealeau State: WI Zip Code: 54601

Daytime Phone (Optional): (608) 534-5155

Public participation for the Federal, Minnesota, and Wisconsin permitting processes will be ongoing for the Hampton- Rochester- La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project. If you sign up for the mailing list, you will be notified when opportunities to participate are being planned.

Please plan to continue your involvement in the process and provide your comments. We appreciate your input.

I-092-002

Your comment has been noted. Alternatives to the project will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

I-092-003

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will describe, in detail, project purpose and need. The justification document which has been accepted by the RUS is the Alternative Evaluation study which is available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

## COMMENT FORM

Public Scoping Meetings

We need your input. Please take a few minutes to provide your comments or questions for the USDA RUS Federal Environmental Impact Statement process and return your completed form today or mail by June 29, 2009. Your comments help in the planning and implementation of the project. **Thank you.**

Completing this form will automatically add you to our mailing list. If you prefer to not be on the mailing list, please check the box below.

☐ I do not wish to be on the project mailing list

Which meeting did you attend?

6-24-09 Scoping Meeting  
Galesville, Wis

Please check the following issues that are important to you for transmission line siting.

☐ Project Purpose and Need

☒ Visual / Aesthetic resources

☒ Proximity to residences

☐ Land use (agriculture, residential, recreation)

☐ Water resources (floodplains, river crossings)

☐ Biological resources (wildlife habitat, raptors)

☐ Historic and cultural sites

☐ Radio or television interference

☐ Noise

☒ Health and safety

☒ Other: Devalue of property

What additional key issues should be addressed when assessing the potential impacts of this project?

- 80' easement will take out valuable trees/diag  
on property between Hwy 53 and the house

- We bought the property for the beauty of  
the trees and wildlife that walk  
thru daily! It's like a private  
reserve away from city congestion, this  
would be all destroyed by taking out the  
trees and foliage to the hwy!

Hampton • Rochester • La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project

### I-093-001

Your comment has been noted. Socioeconomic impacts to property values affected by the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.



If you own property in one of the proposed corridors, please indicate all the existing uses of your property below:

- ☐ Agriculture ☒ Residential ☒ Conservation Easement  
☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe any special uses or circumstances on your property that should be considered when assessing the Project. Please indicate the location of your property.

I-093-005

- Hwy 53 - 1st Home on left of A. Johnson Rd.  
Easement access will remove trees and foliage that are natural area for wildlife that has been pushed out by apt. bldg.

I-093-002

- Hwy 53 is a scenic area out of La Crosse and people go next door to a large campground to get away and the boy scouts have a large camp across the highway

In your opinion, what are the most sensitive resources (biological, cultural, recreational, ect.) in the Project area and why?

I-093-003

- Health + Safety  
- There is data to support health issues due to high voltage exposure long term (It would be too close to our home, our bedroom is on that side of the house.)

#### I-093-002

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to the aesthetic quality of the areas surrounding the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### I-093-003

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human and livestock health and safety will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.



In your opinion, was the project description, purpose, and need for the project adequately explained? If not, what additional information is needed?

I-093-004

Description and purpose were explained.  
Need was not - power consumption was  
reported down last year?  
So I do not feel "need" was explained  
nor demonstrated in this area?

Iding  
in the road.

Please tell us how to reach you.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: JoAnn Lesikar  
Representing (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: W7725 A. Johnson Rd.  
City: Holmen State: WI Zip Code: 54636  
Daytime Phone (Optional): 608 769 2576

Public participation for the Federal, Minnesota, and Wisconsin permitting processes will be ongoing for the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project. If you sign up for the mailing list, you will be notified when opportunities to participate are being planned.

Please plan to continue your involvement in the process and provide your comments. We appreciate your input.

I-093-004

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will describe, in detail, project purpose and need. The justification document which has been accepted by the RUS is the Alternative Evaluation study which is available at:  
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

I-093-005

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts resulting from construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line will be addressed in resource sections throughout the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Representative: \_\_\_\_\_



Delivering electricity you can rely on

**Input Form**

Name: Donna Lystrom  
Address: 46728 135th Ave.  
Telephone: 952 431 9913  
Email: guitcr9@frontiernet.net  
Date: 6-17-09  
Meeting location: Wanamingo

Check one:

- ☒ Landowner ☐ Elected Official  
☐ Agency ☐ City/County Staff  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

We bought our property for  
the view. It will ruin it.  
Our property value will go  
down. It should be put under  
ground.  
put it down 52 or  
down 35 and across  
90 to Rochester

**I-094-001**

Your comment has been noted. Socioeconomic impacts to property values affected by the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

**I-094-002**

Your comment has been noted. Alternatives to the project will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

**I-094-003**

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.

I-094-001

I-094-002

I-094-003

Representative: Bliss Liller



Delivering electricity you can rely on

### Input Form

Name: Melissa

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting location: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one:

☐ Landowner

☐ Elected Official

☐ Agency

☐ City/County Staff

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

Coordination between depots  
work w/ Peardale (Central office  
for state)

\* Low width vs structure height  
ratio table  
o assess impacts birds vs  
ground disturbance

Comments received from the public during the public scoping process are being reviewed and will be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Comments received from the public during the public scoping process are being reviewed and will be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

### I-095-002

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to wildlife will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

I-095-001

I-095-002

Representative: \_\_\_\_\_



Delivering electricity you can rely on

### Input Form

Name: Roger Scheffler

Address: 40699 Cty 7 Blvd. Zm

Telephone: 507-732-7809

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 6-17-09

Meeting location: Wanamingo

Check one:

☒ Landowner

☐ Elected Official

☐ Agency

☐ City/County Staff

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

I own land by Hwy 52. I  
would like to have the existing  
power line incorporated into new  
line and on edge of right of  
way like existing line as to  
not consume crop land more  
than now.

### I-096-001

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at:

<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

I-096-001

Representative: \_\_\_\_\_



Delivering electricity you can rely on

### Input Form

Name: Jim Schreader

Address: MAZEPPI

Telephone: 507-843-5566

Email: JSLK @ Sleepy Eye TEL.NET

Date: 6-16-09

Meeting location: PLAINVIEW

Check one:

☒ Landowner

☐ Elected Official

☐ Agency

☐ City/County Staff

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

I-097-001

LINE SHOULD FOLLOW MAJOR

HIGHWAYS AND NOT DIVIDE

CENTURY FARMS AND GO CLOSE

TO PEOPLE HOUSES

35  
1-90

### I-097-001

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at:

<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.



## COMMENT FORM

Public Scoping Meetings

We need your input. Please take a few minutes to provide your comments or questions for the USDA RUS Federal Environmental Impact Statement process and return your completed form today or mail by June 29, 2009. Your comments help in the planning and implementation of the project. **Thank you.**

Completing this form will automatically add you to our mailing list. If you prefer to not be on the mailing list, please check the box below.

☐ I do not wish to be on the project mailing list

Which meeting did you attend? JUNE 24<sup>th</sup> Centerville Curling Club

Please check the following issues that are important to you for transmission line siting.

☐ Project Purpose and Need

☐ Visual / Aesthetic resources

☒ Proximity to residences

☐ Land use (agriculture, residential, recreation)

☐ Water resources (floodplains, river crossings)

☐ Biological resources (wildlife habitat, raptors)

☐ Historic and cultural sites

☐ Radio or television interference

☒ Noise

☒ Health and safety

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What additional key issues should be addressed when assessing the potential impacts of this project?

The projected lines go right on top of our house

Hampton • Rochester • La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project

I-098-001

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

If you own property in one of the proposed corridors, please indicate all the existing uses of your property below:

- ☒ Agriculture      ☒ Residential      ☐ Conservation Easement  
☐ Commercial      ☐ Industrial      ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe any special uses or circumstances on your property that should be considered when assessing the Project. Please indicate the location of your property.

Concerns with how close it will be to our house.

In your opinion, what are the most sensitive resources (biological, cultural, recreational, ect.) in the Project area and why?

Our house

**In your opinion, was the project description, purpose, and need for the project adequately explained? If not, what additional information is needed?**

[illegible]

*Please tell us how to reach you.*

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Christine & Nathan Spahr

Representing (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: N8827 US. HWY 53

City: Holmen State: Wisconsin Zip Code: 54636

Daytime Phone (Optional): (608) 526-2314

*Public participation for the Federal, Minnesota, and Wisconsin permitting processes will be ongoing for the Hampton- Rochester- La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project. If you sign up for the mailing list, you will be notified when opportunities to participate are being planned.*

Please plan to continue your involvement in the process and provide your comments. We appreciate your input.

Representative: Jenn C.  
Wabasha



Delivering electricity you can rely on

### Input Form

Name: Leonard Wabasha

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting location: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one:

☐ Landowner

☐ Elected Official

☐ Agency

☐ City/County Staff

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

- Active Ceremonial sites in The  
area  
- Suggested site visit (small group)  
- Mt. Menomoneau important  
- Repatriation of graves along  
River - cave + mound burial sites.  
Vision Quest sites (numerous)

### I-099-001

Your comment has been noted. Impacts to historic and archeological resources affected by the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the project website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

I-099-001

From: [Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC](#)  
To: [Lilley, Bliss](#);  
cc: [Collins, Carly](#);  
Subject: FW: CapX 2020-comments for environmental impact statement  
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:33:12 AM  
Attachments: [Angellcapx202Letter.doc](#)

---

---

From: angell@stolaf.edu [mailto:angell@stolaf.edu]  
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 1:38 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: CapX 2020-comments for environmental impact statement

June 29, 2009

Dear Ms. Strength,

As a conservation biologist at St. Olaf College and as a landowner along Goodhue Avenue, I am concerned about the biological resources being put at risk by the Hampton-Rochester length of the CapX2020 project and especially concerned about the route west of Hwy 56 which closely follows the Rice and Goodhue County lines.

**I-101-001** | This area includes a set of state and federally listed species. A number of populations of the federally threatened prairie bush clover exist very close to the route west of Hwy 56. I am personally aware of three populations of the federally threatened prairie bush clover along the bluff prairies within about a half mile or less of the planned line route. There are also a number of state listed species. The MN state endangered Henslow's sparrow has been seen several times in the area. State threatened species in the area include loggerhead shrikes and kitten tails. State special concern species include the prairie vole.

**I-101-002** | All these species occur regularly in the bluff prairies over which the lines will pass. Access roads and construction of towers will disturb the habitat of all of these species. I am particularly concerned with loggerhead shrikes. The lines placed on the route west of Hwy 56 will pass DIRECTLY through at least 3 known shrike territories. These birds have been declining nationally and in the state of Minnesota. Research students at St. Olaf have been monitoring this population as has the MN DNR. The placement of power lines along the route west of Hwy 56 should be

### **I-101-001**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to wildlife and vegetation, particularly federal and state regulated species, will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

### **I-101-002**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to wildlife will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.



strongly discouraged due to the risks faced by these species and declining prairie habitats.

Sincerely,

Diane K. Angell, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Biology  
St. Olaf College  
Northfield, MN 55057

and

Landowner  
XXXX Goodhue Avenue  
Township 111, Range 19  
Section 1

--

Diane K. Angell  
Assistant Professor of Biology  
St. Olaf College  
Northfield, MN 55057  
507-786-3101

I-101-003

June 29, 2009

Dear Ms. Strength,

As a conservation biologist at St. Olaf College and as a landowner along Goodhue Avenue, I am concerned about the biological resources being put at risk by the Hampton-Rochester length of the CapX2020 project and especially concerned about the route west of Hwy 56 which closely follows the Rice and Goodhue County lines.

This area includes a set of state and federally listed species. A number of populations of the federally threatened prairie bush clover exist very close to the route west of Hwy 56. I am personally aware of three populations of the federally threatened prairie bush clover along the bluff prairies within about a half mile or less of the planned line route. There are also a number of state listed species. The MN state endangered Henslow's sparrow has been seen several times in the area. State threatened species in the area include loggerhead shrikes and kitten tails. State special concern species include the prairie vole.

All these species occur regularly in the bluff prairies over which the lines will pass. Access roads and construction of towers will disturb the habitat of all of these species. I am particularly concerned with loggerhead shrikes. The lines placed on the route west of Hwy 56 will pass DIRECTLY through at least 3 known shrike territories. These birds have been declining nationally and in the state of Minnesota. Research students at St. Olaf have been monitoring this population as has the MN DNR. The placement of power lines along the route west of Hwy 56 should be strongly discouraged due to the risks faced by these species and declining prairie habitats.

Sincerely,

Diane K. Angell, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Biology  
St. Olaf College  
Northfield, MN 55057

and

Landowner  
XXXX Goodhue Avenue  
Township 111, Range 19  
Section 1

### I-101-003

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.

From: [Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC](#)  
To: [Lilley, Bliss](#);  
cc: [Collins, Carly](#);  
Subject: FW: CapX2020 project  
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:32:48 AM  
Attachments: [Microsoft Word - Document2.pdf](#)

---

-----Original Message-----

From: horsefly@integra.net [<mailto:horsefly@integra.net>]  
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 11:28 AM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: CapX2020 project

### **I-102-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

June 29, 2009

To: Ms. Stephanie Strength

Re: CAPX2020 Project

Dear Ms. Strength,

It was with very great concern that I learned of the proposal regarding 57th Street in Webster, MN (also known as the "Alternate Route" or "Route B") as an avenue for the CAPX 2020 Brookings to Hampton project.

Not only is the area in question a haven for outdoor enthusiasts and children, it is also valuable cropland, and is abundant in wildlife and waterfowl. There are many established wetlands, wooded habitats, connected creeks and waterways within the corridor, as well as many habitat restoration and waterway resource programs in place and underway by local landowners. The area's diverse ecosystems and natural resources are an important investment for all current and future residents of Webster Township and beyond, and to cut through this area with transmission lines is horrific and most definitely unwelcome.

The voting public spoke out strongly in regard to securing and protecting open spaces for future generations, and adopted the Scott and Rice County comprehensive plan with these tenants. Routing through rural and open spaces is contrary to that goal, and although it may offer less resistance due to a lower population, all citizens will feel the repercussions and loss, whether rural or suburban.

In addition to the loss of natural habitat and quality of life, I am also very vehemently opposed to line, as it will have a devastating effect on landowner property values. No "average easement" payment can make up for the personal and financial loss to homeowners, farmers and residents. All of this, coupled with the very close proximity of the Sky Harbor Airpark, and the frequent presence of low flying small aircraft and helicopters, makes the site especially unsuitable and unsafe.

I sincerely hope that you will eliminate the option of 57<sup>th</sup> Street in Webster, also known as "Alternate" or "Route B", and focus the lines in more suitable areas - preferably underground, near existing high capacity power lines and/or along major corridors – like interstate highways.

I also sincerely hope that you will pay very close attention to the strong voices that argue that the lines are not even needed, and that the impact on health and the environment are much more substantial and valuable than previously granted.

With Respect,

Michael and Anastasia Balfany

3720 50th Street West

Webster, MN 55088

952-652-2786

From: [Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC](#)  
To: [Lilley, Bliss;](#)  
cc: [Collins, Carly;](#)  
Subject: FW: CAPX2020  
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:34:38 AM

---

---

From: katupy@bevcomm.net [mailto:katupy@bevcomm.net]  
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 5:13 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: CAPX2020

**I-103-001** | PLEASE BE INFORMED THAT WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROPOSED NEW  
POWER LINE AND THE DANGERS FOR THOSE MANY FAMILIES UNDER OR NEAR  
THIS HIGH VOLTAGE. IT IS RATHER ASININE TO DO THIS TO HUMAN BEINGS.  
THE TUPYS

### **I-103-001**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human health and safety will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available at:  
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.



From: [Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC](#)  
To: [Lilley, Bliss](#);  
cc: [Collins, Carly](#);  
Subject: FW: CapX2020 - Hampton, MN  
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:26:43 AM

---

---

From: kristinserenascott@yahoo.com [mailto:kristinserenascott@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2009 11:48 AM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: CapX2020 - Hampton, MN

Hi Stephanie,

My name is Kristin Scott - my husband and I are landowners south of Hampton, MN - our property is adjacent to Hwy. 52 within one of the proposed corridors for the Hampton-Rochester line.

Per your voicemail, I spoke with Dennis Ranken - he was very helpful and suggested I contact you via email to see if I can reach you at some point.

I have questions about the likelihood of the 52 corridor being chosen for the route - until now, I had understood that the route to the west (along Hwy 56, I believe) was the likely candidate. If our route is the frontrunner, I need to get educated! Can you tell me about land impacts, timelines, line placement within the corridor, etc? As you can imagine, we're not thrilled with the idea of huge lines down our highway, but I suppose no one likes this in their backyard - it's fine in someone else's, but never your own.

I-104-001

I-104-002

I-104-003

The people in our area, including us, are particularly concerned about impacts to the farming and topsoil along the highway, as well as property value changes that occur when a giant line is placed nearby.

Thanks in advance for your time. I appreciate any information you can provide.

Kristin Scott  
612-554-5019 cell

#### I-104-001

Your comment has been noted. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities are striving to provide the most up to date information in a timely manner. Project information is updated regularly on the project website, [www.capx2020.com](http://www.capx2020.com).

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

#### I-104-002

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to agricultural resources will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### I-104-003

Your comment has been noted. Socioeconomic impacts to property values affected by the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

From: [Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC](#)  
To: [Lilley, Bliss;](#)  
cc: [Collins, Carly;](#)  
Subject: FW: Capx 2020 EIS  
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:33:54 AM

---

---

From: thesacketthouse@yahoo.com [mailto:thesacketthouse@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 4:24 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: Capx 2020 EIS

TO:  
Stephanie Strength  
Environmental Protection Specialist  
USDA, Rural Utilities Service  
Engineering and Environmental Staff  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Stop 1571  
Washington, DC 20250-1571

stephanie.strength@ [usda.gov](mailto:stephanie.strength@usda.gov)  
(202) 720-0468

PLEASE ADD THIS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD REGARDING  
SCOPING FOR EIS!

Dear Stephanie,

Thank you so much for your time I really appreciate know that someone is looking out for us because this has been a long battle that has felt like it has fallen on deaf ears. Thanks again in advance for reading this.

- I-105-001** | This scoping is for the Brookings to Hampton line as well right? Why would one line get a National EIS but not the others? They can not begin construction until the EIS is complete correct? I am still somewhat unclear as to how the scoping process and the EIS work. I am thankful that the EIS is being taken more seriously on a National level. I understand that the state is there to listen to citizens concerns, and from there it goes into the EIS.
- I-105-002** | Here is where I need clarification. If and when there are specific concerns, such as the bee keepers, who's responsibility is it to make sure the appropriate amount of research is done on that particular topic? If you found a report that said that it has some link to the collapse of the colony, do you

### **I-105-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. Dairyland Power Cooperative, one of the CapX2020 utilities, has requested financial assistance from USDA Rural Utilities Service (RUS), for Dairyland's anticipated 11 percent ownership interest in the proposed Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345 kilovolt transmission line project. RUS has determined that its funding of Dairyland's ownership interest is a federal action and therefore subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). RUS is the lead agency for both NEPA and Section 106 review.

Scoping is a process that provides information to those preparing an EIS. The EIS examines the comments received from scoping with the requirements for an analysis of the proposed action with possible resource impacts. Detailed information regarding the EIS process can be found at INSERT WEB page.

An EIS must be finalized with a Record of Decision published before any project-related activities can occur. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

### **I-105-002**

Your comment has been noted. RUS is the responsible federal agent for the completion of the EIS for this project. The ability to make an informed decision regarding the potential impact on any given resources is dependent on the level of research for any particular resource topic based on existing information and the potential project impacts. Activities such as public scoping allow others to share information that can contribute to the analysis of the proposed project.

**I-105-003** | research further to find out more? What if you find three reports that say they can't "prove it" but they are definitely a some risks or concerns. Is that considered not scientific enough to look at relocating the route for her?

**I-105-004** | My other question is related to specific people and the route. The state would like people to write in with their concerns that should be included in the EIS. So for me example, I have extremely dry skin and currently get shocked almost every time I get in my vehicle. I am afraid it will happen more often or be more intense if these lines went near my home. Does the state look at my specific address if they deem this a plausible cause, and put in for considerations for it to go somewhere else?

**I-105-005** | My concerns with this are if people don't understand or know about writing to you that they wouldn't be able to share their concerns. If the route is moved then you have a whole new group of people who may have concerns that are not mentioned. Will they have the same amount of time to add things to the EIS? Will there be additional Scoping meetings if it moved?

**I-105-006** | At the meetings I met someone who has a neighbor who provides equestrian camps for people with disabilities. I have great concerns because the purposed route will go directly over where they ride. I believe horses would be sensitive to the EMF's and I am sure they would get spooked with the slightest shock. The other concern is that many people with disabilities have extremely sensitive sensory systems and can be bother by things that the average person may not be aware of. Do you need her specific name and address to make sure the line does not go near her business? What if she doesn't know or feels scared to contact you? Would her situation be missed until it is too late? or would all of sudden the power lines end up in someone else's yard with less than 2 weeks notice like the MN CAN oil pipeline?

**I-105-009** | It was stated that people could ask questions as well as concerns at the public meetings. Yet when technical questions that were relevant to the scoping for the EIS were asked, the State nor GRE had answers. Responses were such that Scott Ek and Craig Poorker are not "lawyers or electrically engineers". And when questions were asked regarding the Cert. of Need side of the project. The questions were not answered because the certificate of need is in it's final stages. If the public needs more information about this project

### **I-105-003**

Your comment has been noted. Please refer to comment response I-105-003.

### **I-105-004**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human health and safety will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The RUS does not have jurisdiction over the State of Minnesota Certificate of Need evaluations or content of those proceedings.

### **I-105-005**

Your letter/comment card has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line. The utilities are striving to provide the most up to date information in a timely manner. Project information is updated regularly on the project website, [www.capx2020.com](http://www.capx2020.com).

Dairyland Power Cooperative, one of the CapX2020 utilities, has requested financial assistance from USDA Rural Utilities Service (RUS), for Dairyland's anticipated 11 percent ownership interest in the proposed Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345 kilovolt transmission line project. RUS has determined that its funding of Dairyland's ownership interest is a federal action and therefore subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). RUS is the lead agency for both NEPA and Section 106. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement has been published for public review.

### **I-105-006**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human and

**I-105-009** | why won't more meetings be held? If the state is truly concerned and looking out for the citizens why are rote answers given such as "that is what the state requires" cut and dry.

**I-105-010** | A suggestion for future is to have an expert from each area lawyers, electrical engineers, and so on to answer the questions that come up. People can not express their concerns if they do not fully understand the project. I am concerned about the liability of these lines if someone to get injured from them. I contacted my insurance agent and his response was that it depends on the terms that were agree upon. I am sure GRE/Excel all ready have their standard policy in place. I would like it brought out into the open now, so there is time to research it and learn about it to protect ourselves and property.

I have met several people who are on the same line as myself and I would like to name a few of the issues that I feel you should know about:

there is a fireworks business on a portion of the proposed route where no alternate route is offered.

there is a women who keeps bees for a living and they have been in her family for generations.

there is the women who offers horseback riding to people with disabilities.

there is a family that has a major natural gas line going through their property.

there is a farmer who land has been in his family for almost 100years and they put a oil pipeline right through the middle of it last year.

there is a farmer who raises organic dairy cows.

there are people who bought there properties without a power line on it that don't want one now!

there are concerns about stray voltage, EMF's, etc. even having the smallest chance for health issues, everyone should be able to decide what risks they want to take in life

property values will decline on properties with the lines and they will be limited to buyers if they decided to sell after the lines are erected.

mortgage companies are considering not giving loans to properties with major power lines on them.

property values will decline for the adjacent properties and they will not be receiving any kind of monetary compensation for this lose.

livestock health and safety with regard to EMF will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **I-105-007**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human health and safety with regard to EMF will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **I-105-008**

The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities are striving to provide the most up to date information in a timely manner. Project information is updated regularly on the project website, [www.capx2020.com](http://www.capx2020.com).

The scoping comment period is now closed, however this is not the last opportunity to comment on the project. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available at:

<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

#### **I-105-009**

The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities are striving to provide the most up to date information in a timely manner. Project information is updated regularly on the project website, [www.capx2020.com](http://www.capx2020.com).

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available at:

<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication. We anticipate that public meetings will be held during the public review and comment period for the Draft EIS.

#### **I-105-010**

Your comment has been noted. Liability regarding aspects of the project is unknown at this time.

the lines will be directly over school bus stops.  
well drilling companies can not drive equipment near these lines  
Minnesota has a buy the farm act stating that if a line 220 kv or higher is put  
on your property you can sell your entire property to the project (GRE/  
Excel)  
the current eminent domain laws exempt public service corporations. GRE  
is not considered to be a public  
service corp. but Excel is.  
there are concerns about rare species of animals and birds that will have  
power lines going right through their habitat.  
cement foots will be 40-50 feet deep. could the cement leach into the water  
supply of wells or rivers.  
one community has clay lined water treatment pools. how far away would  
the drilling have to be to ensure the earth would not shift and crack them?  
these lines were "advertised" to be for wind, not mentioning that a brand new  
coal plant was being built just across the SD boarder (BIG STONE II)  
now Capx says we never said that this was for wind, what else will come  
up and they can go back on there word (false advertising)?  
the height of the lines will only be 35 feet off the ground during peak usage..  
I am sure there are more things that I can't think of right now. Please feel  
free to contact me if you need any clarification or more information. Thank  
you so much for your time.

Sincerely,  
Nancy and Jon Sackett  
25870 Freeborn Ave  
New Prague, MN 56071  
952-758-9734  
[thesacketthouse@yahoo.com](mailto:thesacketthouse@yahoo.com)

From: [Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC](#)  
To: [Lilley, Bliss](#);  
cc: [Collins, Carly](#);  
Subject: FW: Powerlines proposal  
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:35:23 AM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Chris Nagel [<mailto:nage0049@googlemail.com>]  
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 8:11 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: Powerlines proposal

Hello Ms. Strength,

I am concerned by the 345 kV power lines, which are planned to be installed or expanded along the stretch of Mississippi between Alma and LaCrosse, WI. The concerns I have are aesthetic and concern safety. It is important to me that the project not contribute to the loss of the wilderness area along these backwaters. Is there a way to bury the lines, or otherwise minimize their impact? Is there a way to not locate them in the very visible Mississippi channel?

In terms of safety, I encourage the use of highest industry standards of safety. I will be content paying for this additional service.

Regards,  
Chris Nagel  
Email: [nage0049@gmail.com](mailto:nage0049@gmail.com)  
430 Dacota,  
Winona, MN

#### **I-106-001**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to vegetation and wetlands will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

#### **I-106-002**

Your comment has been noted. Alternatives to the project will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **I-106-003**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to the aesthetic quality of the areas surrounding the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.



From: [Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC](#)  
To: [Lilley, Bliss](#);  
cc: [Collins, Carly](#);  
Subject: FW: Challenge to need for CAPX2020 project  
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:27:08 AM

---

---

From: cmealman1@yahoo.com [mailto:cmealman1@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2009 5:46 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: Challenge to need for CAPX2020 project

I am a resident of Dakota County, MN, whose home is on the preferred route for the Hampton Line. I have attended and spoken at as many of the meetings as possible. I am urging your group to please consider what we perceive and very real environmental negative impacts to our communities with this power line.

- I-107-001** | First, they are using inaccurate and out-dated information! Please use instead the Xcel Energy's and Dairyland Power's current forecasts.
- Secondly, the taxpayers of MN made it clear that we want to be as environmentally responsible as possible in regards to our power needs in the future. We absolutely believe that good conservation, local generation and local transmission can solve any local reliability issues. The CAPX plan will be so disruptive and unsightly for our Upper Mississippi River Wildlife Refuge, Scenic Byways and other natural resources.
- I-107-002** |  
**I-107-003** |
- I-107-004** | There is proven health risk to these lines. They are putting this line on 240th Street which is the main road for the largest concentration of houses in all of DAKota County! What a tremendous impact on our families with children, our special needs children, and the health to all of us. Our property values are going to be severely affected and they have wiggled their way legislatively out of having to give fair compensation.
- I-107-005** |
- I-107-006** | The environmental harm is considerable - we do not need more coal plants and we do NOT need this line to meet our energy needs. Please consider the risks to our bird population along the Mississippi Flyway if CAPX is allowed to continue with their plans.
- I-107-007** |

#### **I-107-001**

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will describe, in detail, project purpose and need. The justification document which has been accepted by the RUS is the Alternative Evaluation study which is available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

#### **I-107-002**

Your comment has been noted. Alternatives to the project will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **I-107-003**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to the aesthetic quality of the areas surrounding the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **I-107-004**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human health and safety will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **I-107-005**

Your comment has been noted. Socioeconomic impacts to property values affected by the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

#### **I-107-006**

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact

Thank you for revisiting the issue of this power line.

Constance Mealman  
8830 - 240th St. W.  
Lakeville, MN 55044  
952-469-3830

Statement will describe, in detail, project purpose and need. The justification document which has been accepted by the RUS is the Alternative Evaluation study which is available at:  
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

**I-107-007**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to wildlife will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

From: [Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC](#)  
To: [Lilley, Bliss;](#)  
cc: [Collins, Carly;](#)  
Subject: FW: CAPX2020 powerline project  
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:34:00 AM

---

---

From: t-alemke@hotmail.com [mailto:t-alemke@hotmail.com]  
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 4:25 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Cc: kbrockway@co.le-sueur.mn.us; pdonovan@co.le-sueur.mn.us; rep.david.bly@house.mn; rep.laura.brod@house.mn; sen.kevin.dahle@senate.mn; mrsprchal@aol.com; tim.pawlenty@state.mn.us  
Subject: CAPX2020 powerline project

To those who represent the people,

I send my concerns as I live in an area that will be affected by the CAPX2020 345kv transmission line from Brookings, SD to Hampton, MN. In my neighborhood there is no for sure route since a neighboring business works with explosives/fireworks and has been fighting to make sure the line doesn't interfere/become a major danger with their business. The original drafts show the 345kv line going right over the business! Now within 1/2 mile east or west of them is a newly shaded/possibility area that includes my home - we have no definite answers who will be impacted! This project is something that makes NO sense - a Utility/Power Company is going to take away a citizen's home or property for their own wants?!?!? Please look realistically into the idea that people will lose their homes because powerlines (that ARE NOT NEEDED) are going to run across our beautiful agricultural area of the south central part of MN!!!!

The fact that power companies aren't required to pay full market value for a person's property is even scarier!!!!

I spent over 3 hours of my time listening to the concerns of neighbors and friends at a CAPX informational meeting at New Prague High School in April. My frustration comes in at the poor homework done by the CAPX2020 people. They didn't even have my street name correct on their maps; I finally pointed out & voiced this at that April meeting (hopefully to the right people). Might I add, after 2 months, it HAS NOT BEEN CORRECTED!!!! The scoping meetings should never have been called informational nights; VERY FEW answers were given!

## I-108-001

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

CAPX2020 claims to follow road-right-of-ways, and yet what is proposed through my area goes through the fields. Small township roads are not always correct in measurement so people will be inconvenienced/ endangered with where CAPX has poorly estimated to place powerline poles. We need to fight for the safety of ourselves!!! At our home we raise our own food, meats & produce; no way will we feel safe raising our children or food with these lines around!

There are MUCH safer routes to consider than what they have proposed!!! Yes, individuals are doing what they need to take care of their own situations, but then CAPX2020 leaders may just move the line minimal yards instead of looking at the fact SCOTT, RICE, & LE SUEUR counties DO NOT want this project criss-crossing through our rural area!!!

Thank you very much for your time; as it may mean my family of 7's home since everything we own may be taken away by the CAPX2020 project.

Not giving up, home schooling mother of 5 that doesn't allow more than one tv in our home AND doesn't want to see SERIOUS dangers in my rural county~

Amy Lemke  
21847 286th Street  
Belle Plaine, MN 56011  
[t-alemke@hotmail.com](mailto:t-alemke@hotmail.com)  
952-873-6850

---

Windows Live™: Keep your life in sync. [Check it out.](#)

From: [Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC](#)  
To: [Lilley, Bliss](#);  
cc: [Collins, Carly](#);  
Subject: FW: Resolution against CapX2020 Project  
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:32:06 AM  
Attachments: [capx2020resolution2009.doc](#)  
[NOPOLE345KV.doc](#)

---

---

From: Mrsprchal@aol.com [mailto:Mrsprchal@aol.com]  
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 11:01 AM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: Resolution against CapX2020 Project

This is a resolution our township submitted against this project...the photo speaks volumes also.  
Jodi Prchal

---

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. [See yours in just 2 easy steps!](#)



Do You Really want me in your front yard ?



**I-110-001**

**WHEREAS**, Capx2020 Utilities filed a Route Permit application with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission on December 29, 2008 for the Brookings County-Hampton 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission line project based on the State's routing criteria and input received from interested stakeholders, including local government officials and landowners in the project area; and

**WHEREAS**, the Le Sueur County Board of Commissioners recognizes the need for additional capacity is driven by urban development; and

**WHEREAS**, the Le Sueur County Board of Commissioners recognizes the environmental sensitivity of the river, and the impact of the preferred route as it enters Le Sueur County from the west; and

**WHEREAS**, the Le Sueur County Board of Commissioners has heard from constituents regarding the location of the transmission line; and

**WHEREAS**, the Le Sueur County Board of Commissioners supports the location for the line as the alternative route up to the Helena Substation then the preferred route east to Hampton.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Le Sueur County Board of Commissioners hereby requests this option be considered as it is a more direct route with less impact to the residents of Le Sueur County.

**I-110-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

**Kessler, Ellen**

---

**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 3:09 PM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss  
**Cc:** Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: CapX2020 and Rice County, MN  
**Attachments:** Microsoft Word - capx mike letter.doc.pdf; ATT00001.txt

-----Original Message-----

From: mikeb@integra.net [mailto:mikeb@integra.net]  
Sent: Friday, July 10, 2009 6:01 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: CapX2020 and Rice County, MN

**I-111-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded you comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

July 9, 2009

Dear Ms. Strength,

I am writing to inform you of a potential threat to aviation safety in our home state of Minnesota.

You are aware of the CapX2020 proposal to place 345-kV high power transmission lines from South Dakota to Hampton, MN.

Just last week I was informed that the proposed alternate route through Rice County, MN has been changed from 57<sup>th</sup> Street in Webster Township to 50<sup>th</sup> Street.

I want to make it clear that I am not for the option of 57<sup>th</sup> Street as an alternate route, as it disrupts a serene, rural area, cuts through valuable crop and grazing land, and needlessly destroys vibrant natural habitat. All of which were valued and deemed a priority in the Countywide Comprehensive Plan adopted by Rice, Scott and Dakota Counties in 2002.

The 50<sup>th</sup> Street option bears the same criteria, but additionally places the over 70 aircraft at Minnesota's busiest airpark community in grave danger. The proposed nearly 200' transmission lines on 50<sup>th</sup> Street would be placed *directly in the airport traffic pattern, only 1/2 mile from the end of the runway*. To further compound the problem, these lines exist in complete, and total conflict with the designated emergency landing field. In the event of an engine failure on takeoff, (the most likely place for an engine to fail), there is only one way to turn, due to the aggressively rolling terrain in the other direction. Note that this is exactly where the proposed power lines would be installed.

Sky Harbor Airpark is a chartered and authorized emergency-use airfield, used by MEDEVAC flights and law enforcement organizations, and the lines would gravely endanger the use of public equipment and lives.

Please help us stop this critical aviation safety threat. There are many documented and deadly aviation power line incidents recorded in the NASA ASRS aviation safety program. Stop this dangerous proposal before we add another incident from a local Minnesota airfield.

Sincerely,

Mike Balfany, Lt Col (ret) USAF  
3720 50<sup>th</sup> Street  
Webster, MN 55088  
horsefly@integra.net  
952-652-2786

**Kessler, Ellen**

---

**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 3:04 PM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss  
**Cc:** Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: CapX2020 Project  
**Attachments:** Microsoft Word - stephanie strength capx2020doc.pdf; ATT00001.txt

-----Original Message-----

From: horsefly@integra.net [mailto:horsefly@integra.net]  
Sent: Tuesday, July 07, 2009 3:05 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: CapX2020 Project

Dear Ms. Strength,

I am strongly opposed to the CapX2020 project, and have attached a letter documenting some of my concerns, and specifically the use of 50th Street as an alternative route for the project.

I want to be sure to note that I feel that both 50th Street and 57th Street in Webster, MN (Rice County) are unsuitable for identical reasons, with 50th Street slightly more so, due to the even closer proximity to the Sky Harbor Airpark.

Again, thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to call or email with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Anastasia Balfany  
3720 50th Street West  
Webster, MN 55088  
952-652-2786

**I-112-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

July 7, 2009

To: Ms. Stephanie Strength

Re: CAPX2020 Project and Webster Township/Rice County MN

Dear Ms. Strength,

It was with very great concern and that we learned of the proposal regarding the use of **50th Street in Webster, MN** in Rice County as a new proposed alternate route for the CAPX 2020 Brookings to Hampton project. Ironically, my husband and I both spoke out vehemently against the project, including the 57<sup>th</sup> Street alternative, only to find that an additional route option is now literally our front yard. An alternative that is truly flawed, as the reasoning for this route is "to avoid homes along 57<sup>th</sup> Street", which gives no value or importance to the many homes and families on 50<sup>th</sup> Street! Certainly the concerns and comments that I raised in my previous letters apply to this location, as well.

The voting public spoke out strongly in regard to securing and protecting open spaces for future generations, and adopted the Scott and Rice County comprehensive plan with these tenants just a few years ago.

Routing through rural and open spaces is contrary to that goal, and although it may offer less resistance due to a much lower population, all citizens will feel the repercussions and loss, whether rural or suburban.

We pride ourselves on living in an area that is rich in natural beauty and a true haven for wildlife and outdoor enthusiasts. Our neighbors, as well as ourselves, have worked hard with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to establish secure wildlife habitat and wetlands – at significant personal expense and effort, with the understanding that the diverse ecosystems and natural resources are an important investment for all current and future residents of Webster Township and beyond, and to cut through this area with transmission lines is horrific and most definitely unwelcome. Our neighbors include retirees living on century farms, equestrian businesses and hobbyist, working farmers, teachers, doctors, and many children. The thought of allowing the intrusion and subsequent, documented risks associated with high voltage power line in this setting is unacceptable on many, many levels.

In addition to the loss of natural habitat and quality of life, I am also very vehemently opposed to line, as it will have a devastating effect on landowner property values. No "average easement" payment can make up for the personal and financial loss to homeowners, farmers and residents. Many of whom have lived on their homesteads for generations. We personally have invested over \$500,000 in renovations to our historic home, and there is no doubt that if the power lines are allowed on 50<sup>th</sup> Street (or 57<sup>th</sup> Street), we will most certainly face catastrophic devaluation.

All of this, coupled with the very close proximity of the Sky Harbor Airpark (located only ½ mile south of 50<sup>th</sup> Street West!), and the frequent presence of low flying small aircraft, homebuilt aircraft, hot air balloons and

helicopters, makes the site especially unsuitable and completely unsafe. (To personally note, just this past week a hot air balloon was blown off-course and almost landed in the treetops along 50<sup>th</sup> Street and Canby.)

I sincerely hope that you will eliminate the option of 50<sup>th</sup> Street in Webster and focus the lines in more suitable areas - preferably underground, near existing high capacity power lines and/or along major corridors – like interstate highways.

I also sincerely hope that you will pay very close attention to the strong voices that argue that the lines are not even needed, and that the impact on health and the environment are much more substantial and valuable than previously granted.

With Respect,

Michael and Anastasia Balfany  
3720 50th Street West  
Webster, MN 55088  
952-652-2786



---

**Kessler, Ellen**

---

**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:43 AM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss; Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: Public input for th e345 kV transmission Line

---

**From:** Doug and Kathy [mailto:bloemke@hbc.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 02, 2009 10:53 PM  
**To:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
**Cc:** Doug and Kathy  
**Subject:** Public input for th e345 kV transmission Line

Stephanie Strength,

I assumed that there would be a form to fill out on line, but if this e-mail is O.K. then great.

**I-113-002** | I attend the information meeting at Centerville to become familiar with the route of the transmission line, as I was aware that a proposed corridor was down our valley. My concern is for the aesthetics of the valley, the aesthetics of the neighborhood and the noise from the power line. Pleasant Valley is exactly that, a very picturesque valley with a trout stream, springs, bluffs, and mature trees. It is a very quiet and peaceful place to live.

**I-113-001** | My wife and I bought our home 25 years ago because of the beauty of the valley and we knew that when we needed to leave here, the property would have good value. The power line would negatively affect our valley; the power line would be unsightly, noisy and affect our property values.  
**I-113-003** | Even the power lines now within the neighborhood are buried to preserve the aesthetics.

Thank-you for providing this forum to express our concerns.

### **I-113-001**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to the aesthetic quality of the areas surrounding the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

### **I-113-002**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to the aesthetic quality of the areas surrounding the transmission line will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

### **I-113-003**

Your comment has been noted. Alternatives to the project will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

file:///P:/2007/07180025.00\_CAPX/Documents/Community Outreach/Public Comments/NEPA RUS/To Be Uploaded/FW CapX 2020a.htm

**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:37 AM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss  
**Cc:** Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: CapX 2020

I-114-001

**From:** Jenny Braun [mailto:jennymbraun@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 30, 2009 9:40 AM  
**To:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
**Subject:** CapX 2020

Our property is located on the east side of Highway 3 in Castle Rock Township. Our property was recently annexed into the City of Farmington. We spent several years working on getting this annexation done. If the economy had not taken a downturn this property would already be in residential housing. We would prefer the line be abandoned or if not totally rerouted as it would cause us and the City of Farmington a serious economic impact.

Also, the property west of Highway 3 is a wetland. This would cause a great deal more environmental impact then moving the line to the south.

The property to the east of our property has been recently annexed into the City of Farmington also. The owner of the property is ISD 192 who plans to build a middle school on the property. Obviously, I do not think this line should be running by a school.

The line going through our property and the on the west side of Highway 3 has several 'jogs' in at (where the line goes at non 90 degree angles). Our proposed routes DO NOT have the angles. Our proposed route runs straight east/west with NO jogs.

As stated in our emails, we are more then strongly opposed to this line running along the edge of our property. We have submitted alternate routes to Scott Eck already. We prefer not to hire an attorney to fight this, but if necessary we will.

Thank You.

Craig Braun  
651-463-2302

file:///P:/2007/07180025.00\_CAPX/Documents/Comm...mments/NEPA RUS/To Be Uploaded/FW CapX 2020a.htm [7/22/2009 8:36:17 AM]

## I-114-001

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

**Kessler, Ellen**

---

**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 3:05 PM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss  
**Cc:** Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: Powerline

---

From: jodydoyle@integra.net [mailto:jodydoyle@integra.net]  
Sent: Wednesday, July 08, 2009 9:21 AM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: Powerline

I am writing in concern about the powerline possibly being built on 50th. This would put the powerline in the flight pattern of the Sky Harbor Airpark.

There are 50 homes on the Sky Harbor Airpark and it is the busiest airpark in the state of MN. Putting a powerline in its flight path would be a major safety concern. It would put a huge liability on the county, powerline company, ect... if something were to happen. Please rethink this option for safety and liability reasons.

Thank you,

Jody Doyle  
Pilot  
3299 45th St W  
Webster, MN 55088  
952-652-2042

**I-115-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded your comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

---

**Kessler, Ellen**

---

**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:39 AM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss  
**Cc:** Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: Comments on capx2020 Twin City to Rochester possible routes

---

**From:** LMEndres@pcl.com [mailto:LMEndres@pcl.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 01, 2009 10:52 AM  
**To:** thomas.g.hillstrom@xcelenergy.com; Erin.A.Klegstad@xcelenergy.com; dawn.schultz@xcelenergy.com; Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
**Cc:** LMEndres@pcl.com; lme\_27@netzero.net; mendresswtm27@embargo.com; scottendres@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Comments on capx2020 Twin City to Rochester possible routes

Please forward to the appropriate party.

I attended the open house meeting at Wanamingo, MN for the CapX2020 proposed possible routes from Hampton to Rochester.

I viewed the two proposed possible routes in general and in detail in the Hampton area.

**I-117-002** | I discussed with Thomas Hillstrom ( from Xcel Energy) at the meeting the huge agricultural and financial impact that one of the routes would have on my parents (Melvin and Mary Lou Endres) land.

My parents live at 22075 Northfield Blvd. northeast of Hampton. My parent have owned/farmed this land for over 50 years. They now are elderly and depend on the income that comes from the result of many years of hard work getting this land set up as a retirement income.

**I-117-003** | The route that effects there land is the stretch identified as A122 on the maps given out at the meeting. This proposed route would divide two quarter sections of land ( NE ¼ of section 4 and NW ¼ of section 3 in Hampton Township ) that have overlapping pivot style irrigation systems on them. This system irrigate approximately 300 acres of prime agricultural land. Thomas Hillstrom was unaware of the irrigation system and advised that this be pointed out via comments to the environmental impact statement. He went on to say that irrigation systems were one of the things capx2020 tried to avoid during the process of determining a route.

**I-117-001** | The route that runs on the east side of Highway 52 in the established right of way would impact property owners the least, is the most direct and least expensive . This is the area identified as A5 on the maps given out at the meeting.

Please add us to the mailing list and copy the following e-mail addresses on any future information on this topic. E-mail both my work and home address as well as my parents.

Lori M. Endres  
22745 Northfield Blvd.  
Hampton, MN 55031  
Home: [lme\\_27@netzero.net](mailto:lme_27@netzero.net)  
Work: [lmendres@pcl.com](mailto:lmendres@pcl.com)  
Cell: 612-328-1134  
Home: 651-437-6825

## **I-117-001**

Your comment has been noted. The criteria used to route the transmission line is described in the Macro Corridor Study which is available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. These criteria and routing process will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the development and planning stages and the utilities have not yet permitted a route for the transmission line.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

## **I-117-002**

Your comment has been noted. Please refer to comment response I-117-001.

## **I-117-003**

Your comment has been noted. Please refer to comment response I-117-001.

Melvin and Mary Lou Endres  
22075 Northfield Blvd.  
Hampton, MN 55031  
[mendresswtm27@embargo.com](mailto:mendresswtm27@embargo.com)

Sincerely,  
Lori M. Endres

**Kessler, Ellen**

**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:37 AM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss  
**Cc:** Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: Comments on EIS--article exhibiting that CapX2020 is not needed --Christian Science Monitor  
**Attachments:** Amer. Future.Wind.Web.Chr.Sc.Monitor 2.18.09.doc

-----Original Message-----

From: ruthfood@charter.net [mailto:ruthfood@charter.net]  
Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2009 12:46 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: Comments on EIS--article exhibiting that CapX2020 is not needed --Christian Science Monitor

**I-119-001** | Attached article discusses how the East coast does not want to receive the MIDWEST's wind or other energy via long distance transmission lines.

**I-119-002** | CapX2020 developers admit that their project will connect to a Wisconsin line in La Crosse that travels to points East. Obviously the power is not for local, regional need. It is for profit seeking utilities that want to stay connected to an old paradigm of energy delivery that is coal-based.

**I-119-003** | During the Certificate of Need, the utilities would not agree to ANY amount of wind energy on the La Crosse line. It's all about dirty coal which will continue to harm our environment.  
fu  
If the RUS provides funding for the project, they will be using tax payers funds to continue the cycle of CO2 emissions from coal-fired energy. The RUS must fund small, local renewable energy projects which can fully supply our needs with the correct strategic planning and development. Some small local lines may be needed but super high voltage 345Kv lines are NOT needed.

See attached file for the article from the Christian Science Monitor - Americas Future Wind Web.

**I-119-001**

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

**I-119-002**

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will describe, in detail, project purpose and need. The justification document which has been accepted by the RUS is the Alternative Evaluation study which is available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

**I-119-003**

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to social and economic resources will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.



<http://features.esmonitor.com/innovation/2009/02/18/americas-future-wind-web/>

## America's future wind web?

Wind power could feed 20 percent of the US energy diet. But first, the country needs a new energy network.

By [Mark Clayton](#) | Staff Writer for The Christian Science Monitor/ February 18, 2009 edition

Staff writer Mark Clayton discusses the debate going on in the Midwestern US over power transmission lines for wind turbines.

Staff writer Mark Clayton



MADISON, S.D.

Out across this wind-swept, wheat-growing state, Jeffrey Nelson sees a new crop rising – electricity from the world's largest wind-turbine farms sending electrons thousands of miles east to Chicago or Boston.

But it's a vision the South Dakota Wind Energy Association president says will never happen without something far larger, more controversial, and even more expensive: gigantic new high-voltage transmission lines.

Depending on whom you talk to, emerging plans to build 765,000 volt transmission lines to bring power from the "Saudi Arabia of wind" in the Dakotas to population centers in the Midwest and East Coast are either vital to the nation or a boondoggle waiting to happen.

"This state has vast resources it can't use without building new power lines," says Mr. Nelson, gesturing at lines on a grid map at the East River Electric Power Cooperative in Madison, where he is manager. "These high-voltage lines are like farm-to-market roads, but instead of wheat, it's electricity being transported. We need to think in those terms." Many are clearly doing just that.

With political winds blowing toward renewable energy, power-line proposals are popping up to carry wind power around the country. President Obama has said he wants to see renewable wind from the plains help

power cities like Chicago. The US Department of Energy last year reported that the nation could harvest 20 percent of its electricity from wind by 2020, much of it by tapping wind energy in places like South Dakota, which boasts the fourth best wind resource in the nation.

But to hook up to that steady 20- to 30-mile-per-hour breeze, the nation will need perhaps 15,000 miles of new transmission lines costing \$80 billion, according to a new Joint Coordinated System Plan released Feb. 14, by the Midwest Independent System Operator (MISO), which coordinates regional power distribution.

“This is information we believe that our leaders need to consider as they begin work under a new administration and start defining our energy future,” John Bear, president of MISO said in a statement.

But grass-roots activists cite not only traditional “not-in-my-back-yard” (NIMBY) concerns about 150-to-200-foot-high towers, but question whether costs can be justified, compared with other renewable choices. As well, they note, such lines could carry far more “black electrons” from coal-fired power plants than green ones from wind.

A case in point involves Titan, which could one day be the largest wind farm in the world located in the middle of South Dakota. The Titan plan for 2,000 wind turbines generating 5,000 megawatts of power caused barely a ripple of media attention when announced last spring. Yet the plan to connect Titan to population centers – a \$12 billion, 3,000-mile power line dubbed “Green Power Express” announced Feb. 9 – produced a gale of public attention among environmentalists.

While confirming that electrons from many types of power generation, including coal, would be carried by the proposed line, the key reason to build it is access to wind power, say company officials for Novi, Mich.-based ITC Holdings, which proposed the new line.

“The purpose of our plan is to build the infrastructure to where the wind blows most abundantly,” says Lisa Aragon, director of strategic initiatives at ITC. “As an independent transmission company, we can’t favor one type of energy over another. We do favor harnessing the wind for both environmental sustainability and energy security reasons.”

#### **Environmentalist response**

But critics have dubbed the new transmission line plan the “Green-wash Express” saying it could easily transmit as much or more energy produced by coal-fired power plants in South Dakota as wind energy.

“There’s no regulatory jurisdiction over this ‘green-power’ power line, not even a fig leaf that would require it to carry wind power,” says Paula Maccabee, counsel for Citizens Energy Task Force in Minneapolis, a group opposing the line. “It’s name is just a public relations slogan.”

Such plans, however, arrive amid a huge political push to harness wind power as one installment toward lessening US carbon emissions from energy production. President Obama has called for the United States to double renewable energy production in three years and get 25% of the nation’s electricity from renewable resources by 2025. The new Obama stimulus plan includes \$4 billion for a “Smart Grid” and new transmission lines.

Add to that the impetus generated as soon as next month when Congress is expected to begin weighing a new national “renewable electricity standard” that would require all electric utilities to ensure a portion of their power is from renewable sources. A draft bill before the US Senate calls for at least 20 percent of power from renewable sources by 2021 with gains in energy efficiency permitted to make up a quarter of the total.

Even without federal legislation, however, state mandates in nearly half of all states will require a significant percentage of power to be from renewable sources. In Minnesota, for instance, the state's renewable portfolio standard calls for 25 percent renewable power by 2025.

To that end, there is CapX, a joint effort by 11 utilities that own transmission lines in Minnesota and surrounding regions to bring Dakota wind power to their city centers. Yet the new CapX line could one-day carry power transmitted from Big Stone II, a coal-fired power plant in South Dakota, documents show. And that has Jeremy Chipps, who lives near Lacrescent, Minn., where the line would run, up in arms to fight it.

Efficiency, cost, environmental concerns, and national security are Mr. Chipps's talking points. Beside transmission line losses, the cost and potential of such lines as a terrorist target point to the need for more localized renewable power generation such as solar panels and local wind turbines, he says. And then there's the coal-power carried on the lines.

"It really is time to deploy an energy production and smart-grid systems that are much safer, more intelligent, and much more efficient," Chipps says. "If we do this, we won't need massive, costly networks of new transmission lines."

#### **Who will pay for the lines?**

Transmission costs traditionally end up paid for by rate-payers in the states that the lines cross. The Green Power Express, for instance, would cross seven states, each with its own siting requirements and ways of allocating who pays. So, how will South Dakotans feel if they end up paying higher electric rates for lines serving other states?

"To what extent do [rate-payers] have an appetite for increasing utility bills?" asks Dusty Johnson, chairman of the South Dakota Public Utility Commission. "There are some very significant geopolitical concerns when people start talking about multibillion [dollar] transmission projects."

He agrees with Chipps that there is a "technological risk" and danger in investing in costly lines that might not be needed in the future.

"If it ends up being more cost effective for everyone to have small wind turbines in their backyard and solar panels on their roofs, do we need these lines?" he asks. "I think we do. But such investments are not without risk."

Other experts have concerns, too. Before the MISO report came out, Gordon van Welie of ISO New England and Stephen Whitley, president of New York Independent System Operator – grid operators for much of the East Coast – issued a pointed dissent from the MISO plan.

"Until additional scenarios that include the development of local resources are analyzed, we do not believe any single transmission plan can be presented as a solution to the integration of additional renewable energy resources in the United States," the men wrote in a Feb. 4 letter.

Given the renewable development, energy efficiency, and likelihood of new ties to Canada, the need to construct long transmission lines to the Midwest "would likely be reduced and in turn overall transmission costs may be lower," the system operators wrote.

#### **Where to put the lines?**

Even in the middle of wide open spaces, power line towers and wind turbines can reduce the area available to farm. Closer to urban areas, 150-200 foot towers spoiling the view and noise from crackling power lines can provoke local resistance that can delay construction for years.

“We’re advocating a streamlined process,” ITC’s Ms. Aragon says. “In many states there is no defined time for how long siting can go on.... If siting can’t be completed in the current [state] model, we may need to move to a federal siting process.”

Under federal law, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has designated several “national corridors” for power lines on the East and West coasts. It could designate others. If states can’t complete siting on power lines within the corridors, FERC can override states.

But there is also growing sentiment that FERC should not have the broad transmission siting authority granted under the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Not surprisingly, parks-advocacy groups and others are furious at utility plans to build transmission lines near national parks and heritage sites like the Appalachian Trail and civil war battlefields. As many as 14 restive US senators reportedly agree and are poised to fight FERC authority. Those votes could be critical in any future battle over transmission lines.

Yet proponents of transmission lines say there’s not much question they will be built – only where, and who will pay.

“It will be critical for the federal and state government to provide some form of expedited regulatory approval, additional financial incentives and tax relief for new interstate transmission projects,” writes John Lamb, president of Clipper Windpower Development, developer of the Titan plan in an e-mail.

Out in South Dakota, the PUC’s Mr. Johnson is inclined to agree.

“We need a lot more transmission,” he says. “It’s hard in Washington to divvy up money according to merit and not politics. But if they do it on merit, South Dakota is going to do very well. We’ve got the wind.”

*[Clarification: The proposed CapX transmission line mentioned above will not connect directly to the Big Stone II coal-fired power plant, as originally stated, but is expected to eventually carry power transmitted to it over a separate line from the plant]*